

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 IO-10 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 L-02 SAJ-01 /068 W

----- 070512

R 260631Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9666

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 5838

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E.O. 11652: XGDS 1

TAGS: PFOR EG UR XF

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S CONVERSATION WITH EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR

1. SUMMARY. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR ISMAIL TOLD AMBASSADOR APRIL 25 THAT FAHMY'S TALKS IN MOSCOW PRODUCED NO COMMITMENT ON A FIRM DATE TO RESUME THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS DID SUGGEST AN OPENING IN JUNE. IN A RUNDOWN ON EGYPT'S PRESENT THINKING ABOUT THE SUBSTANTIVE SIDE OF THE MEPC, ISMAIL TOOK A LINE CLOSELY PARALLEL TO GROMYKO'S APRIL 23 STATEMENT. HE SUGGESTED THAT CAIRO IS NOW THINKING THAT THE CONFERENCE SHOULD FIRST AGREE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES OR "HEADINGS" (HE MENTIONED ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO 1967 FRONTIERS, A PALESTINIAN SETTLEMENT, AND AGREEMENT ON GUARANTEES) AND THEN PROCEED TO DISCUSS THE DETAILS AND IMPLEMENTATION

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OF A SETTLEMENT. REGARDING EGYPT'S PROPOSAL TO INCLUDE

FRANCE, THE UK AND NON-ALIGNED STATES IN THE MEPC, HE HAS THE IMPRESSION MOSCOW DEFINITELY DOES NOT FAVOR EXPANSION OF THE CONFERENCE AND THAT CAIRO IS NOT LIKELY TO PRESS IT. ISMAIL OBSERVED THAT CAIRO IS AT PRESENT CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEM OF WHAT KIND OF INVITATION THE PALESTINIANS SHOULD RECEIVE FOR GENEVA, BUT HAD NOTHING TO SAY ABOUT WHAT IF ANYTHING RESULTED FROM THE SOVIET-EGYPTIAN TALKS ON THIS MATTER. ISMAIL CLAIMED FAHMY'S VISIT HAD PRODUCED NO IMPORTANT RESULTS ON BILATERAL AFFAIRS. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF APRIL 24, EGYPTIAN FIRST SECRETARY GAVE LARGELY THE SAME RUNDOWN ON THE EGYPTIAN VISIT, BUT ADDED THAT BREZHNEV HAD PERSONALLY ASSURED FAHMY HE WOULD VISIT CAIRO. END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR CALLED ON EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR HAFEZ ISMAIL APRIL 25 TO DISCUSS FAHMY'S RECENT VISIT TO MOSCOW AND THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION. ISMAIL CONFIRMED THAT THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER ON THE DAY BEFORE FAHMY'S DEPARTURE FOR MOSCOW PREVENTED HIM FROM RETURNING FOR THE SOVIET-EGYPTIAN TALKS. HE SAID HE DID NOT YET HAVE A FULL ACCOUNT OF FAHMY CONVERSATIONS, BUT GAVE A RUNDOWN ON THE MAIN TOPICS DISCUSSED.

3. GENEVA CONFERENCE. ISMAIL SAID THE SOVIETS HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE MEPC BE RECONVENED IN JUNE. THE EGYPTIANS, HOWEVER, DID NOT WANT TO BE PINNED DOWN ON A DEFINITE DATE, AND THE SOVIETS HAD NOT PRESSED THE MATTER. HE RECALLED THAT THE SOVIET-SYRIAN COMMUNIQUE HAD SET SUCH A DEADLINE LAST WINTER AND IT HAD NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO MEET IT. IN ISMAIL'S VIEW THE CONFERENCE MIGHT RESUME IN JUNE, BUT COULD EQUALLY BE DELAYED UNTIL JULY OR LATER. IN THE END, HE CONCLUDED, IT WAS AGREED TO MAKE NO REFERENCE TO A SPECIFIC TIME FOR RESUMING THE CONFERENCE IN THE COMMUNIQUE.

4. AS FOR THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ITSELF, ISMAIL INDICATED THAT CAIRO'S THINKING IS FIRST TO CONCLUDE AGREEMENT ON AN "OVERALL FRAMEWORK" ALONG THE LINES OF WHAT HE TERMED THE "RUSK PLAN" OF 1968 OR THE "ROGERS PLAN" OF
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1970. SUCH A FRAMEWORK MIGHT INCLUDE AGREEMENT ON WITHDRAWAL TO THE 1967 FRONTIERS, A PALESTINIAN SETTLEMENT, AND AGREEMENT ABOUT GUARANTEES. THESE COULD BE GENERAL "HEADINGS" OR PRINCIPLES, ON THE BASIS OF WHICH THE MEPC SUBSEQUENTLY COULD WORK OUT DETAILS OF SETTLEMENT. THE TIME FRAME FOR WITHDRAWALS, FOR EXAMPLE, MIGHT BE SIX MONTHS OR EVEN A DECADE. QUERIED REGARDING HIS VIEWS ON THE STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH, ISMAIL GAVE A DIFFUSE

REPLY, BUT INDICATED THAT THIS APPROACH MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE IN IMPLEMENTING THE DETAILS OF A SETTLEMENT. IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT ANY SUCH STEPS MUST BE WITHIN THE OVERALL FRAMEWORK OF THE CONFERENCE.

5. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT EGYPT'S PROPOSAL TO INCLUDE THE FRENCH, BRITISH AND NON-ALIGNED IN THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, ISMAIL SAID EGYPT "HAS BEEN FLIRTING WITH THIS IDEA." HOWEVER, IT IS NOT "A CONDITION" FOR RESUMPTION OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, AND HE EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT EGYPT WILL WANT "TO PRESS" THIS SUGGESTION. ISMAIL WENT ON TO SAY THE EGYPTIAN VIEWS ABOUT THE TYPE OF ROLE THESE STATES MIGHT PLAY IS "RATHER UNCLEAR," BUT HE THOUGHT EGYPT HAD RAISED THE IDEA IN VIEW OF CONCERN BY SOME THAT THE MEPC MIGHT BECOME POLARIZED. THE PRESENCE OF ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS, IT WAS THOUGHT, MIGHT BE USEFUL IN PREVENTING SUCH A DEVELOPMENT, HE SAID. ASKED WHETHER THIS IDEA HAD BEEN RAISED WITH SOVIETS DURING FAHMY VISIT, ISMAIL SAID HE THOUGHT SO, AND THE EGYPTIANS RECEIVED IMPRESSION THAT SOVIETS DEFINITELY DO NOT FAVOR EXPANDING THE CONFERENCE.

6. PALESTINIAN QUESTION. ONE PROBLEM NOW BEING CONSIDERED IN CAIRO, ACCORDING TO ISMAIL, IS HOW THE INVITATION TO THE PALESTINIANS FOR THE MEPC SHOULD BE WORDED, SO THAT IT WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PALESTINIANS AND TO THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS. EGYPTIAN THINKING, HE SAID, IS THAT THE INVITATION SHOULD BE SHORT AND SIMPLE. FOR EXAMPLE, IT SHOULD MAKE NO REFERENCE TO UN RESOLUTIONS, TERRITORIAL PROBLEMS, OR

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W
----- 060507

R 260631Z APR 75
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9667
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOSCOW 5838

EXDIS

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

OTHER CONCRETE MATTERS. AS TO THE PROCEDURE FOR ISSUING AN INVITATION AND TIME TIMING OF PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE MEPC, ISMAIL SAID EGYPT FAVORS THE IDEA OF CONVENING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE FIRST AND THEM AGREEING ON AND ISSUING THE INVITATION TO THE PALESTINIANS. THE TIMING OF THE PLO'S ATTENDANCE COULD, HOWEVER, BE LEFT OPEN, AND EGYPT BELIEVES COULD COME AT A LATER STAGE.

7. U.S.-SOVIET ROLE. AN ADDITIONAL FACTOR ON EGYPT'S MIND, ISMAIL SAID, IS U.S.-USSR RELATIONSHIP. HE STRESSED SEVERAL TIMES--AS HE HAS WITH US BEFORE--THAT THE AMERICANS AND SOVIETS MUST COOPERATE, THAT THERE CAN BE NO MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT WITHOUT U.S.-SOVIET AGREEMENT. CAIRO, HE SAID, IS WONDERING WHAT THE SITUATION IS BETWEEN THE USSR AND U.S., PARTICULARLY AFTER THE SECRETARY'S RECENT STATEMENT THAT THE U.S. WILL NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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FORGET WHO SUPPLIED ARMS TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE.

8. SOVIET-EGYPTIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS. ISMAIL SAID SO FAR AS HE KNEW THE QUESTION OF RESCHEDULING EGYPT'S SOVIET DEBT HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED BY FAHMY. FOR THE MOMENT THIS QUESTION IS "SET ASIDE." IN ADDITION IT IS A MATTER THAT CAN ONLY BE DECIDED "AT A HIGH LEVEL"--I.E., BY PRIME MINISTERS, AT LEAST. ON THE SOVIET SIDE, ISMAIL SAID MOSCOW SEEMS TO BE FAVORABLE

TO "SOME KIND OF COMPROMISE", BUT THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT YET COMMITTED THEMSELVES ON ANY DETAILS. IN THE MEANTIME REGULAR TRANSACTIONS CONTINUE, BUT "NOTHING NEW IS BEING UNDERTAKEN." IN OTHER AREAS, ISMAIL SAID, THE SAME SITUATION PERTAINS. IN THE MILITARY AREA EXCHANGES OF EXPERTS AND DELIVERY OF SPARE PARTS GO ON, BUT THERE IS "NOTHING NEW."

9. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF APRIL 24, EGYPTIAN FIRST SECRETARY GAVE ALMOST IDENTICAL RUNDOWN ON FAHMY VISIT, APPARENTLY BASED ON BRIEFING BY AMBASSADOR ISMAIL. THE EGYPTIAN ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT ONE ELEMENT OF FAHMY'S MEETING WITH BREZHNEV WAS DISCUSSION OF BREZHNEV'S ME TRIP. THE EGYPTIAN COMMENTED THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT IT TO TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE FALL. ON ATMOSPHERICS OF THE BREZHNEV AUDIENCE, AMBASSADOR ISMAIL TOLD ME THAT THE EGYPTIANS WERE INFORMED BEFORE FAHMY'S MEETING THAT BREZHNEV WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SEE HIM FOR A PROLONGED TALK. THE EGYPTIANS WERE GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND THAT BREZHNEV'S HEALTH DICTATED THIS REQUEST. THE TALK IN FACT LASTED ABOUT ONE HOUR AND TWENTY MINUTES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, MEETING AGENDA, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PEACE TALKS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOSCOW05838
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750162-0599, D750147-0475
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750413/aaaaalxg.tel
Line Count: 246
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <22 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR'S CONVERSATION WITH EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR
TAGS: PFOR, EG, UR, XF, GENEVA, MEPC, (MATLOCK, JACK F JR), (ISMAIL, HAFEZ)
To: STATE SS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006